Office of the Fire Marshal

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USE OF SCHOOLS FOR SLEEPING ACCOMMODATION

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GUIDELINE

January 2002

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION **PAGE**

Abstract 2

1.0 SCOPE 3

2.0 SUBMISSION FOR APPROVAL 3

3.0 SCHOOL BOARD SUBMISSION COVER LETTER 4

4.0 WYD FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURES 4
- 4.1 School Custodian 5
- 4.2 Supervisory Staff 5
- 4.3 Fire Wardens 6

5.0 SITE AND FLOOR PLANS 6

6.0 FIRE EMERGENCY PROCEDURES 6

7.0 SCHOOL DESIGNATION FORM 7

8.0 FIRE PROTECTION EQUIPMENT 7

APPENDICES

Appendix A – School Board Submission Cover Letter
Appendix B – Fire Emergency Procedures
Appendix C – School Designation Form

January, 2002
OFM Section: Fire Safety Standards at (416) 325-3100

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Abstract

Utilization of existing facilities for activities that were not originally anticipated in their design is becoming more prevalent as a means of optimizing resources available to local communities. With the World Youth Day 2002 event occurring in the Greater Toronto area and surrounding municipalities during July, 2002, the World Youth Day organization will have need for a number of schools to be used to provide temporary sleeping accommodation for the people (pilgrims) attending this event.

The Building and Development Branch, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has indicated that the Change of Use provisions in the Ontario Building Code were not intended for short term, temporary change of use and would not be appropriate for this event. Assessment of this temporary use should be carried out through an approval process under Article 2.1.2.2. of the Ontario Fire Code.

This guideline is intended to assist school boards, the World Youth Day organization and fire officials in the assessment of facilities to provide temporary sleeping accommodation and sets out criteria to use in ensuring that safeguards are in place and fire safety responsibilities are established.

1.0 SCOPE

This guideline has been established to aid school board officials, World Youth Day organizers and fire officials in the assessment of school facilities for temporary sleeping accommodation during World Youth Day 2002 (WYD). Sleeping accommodation will be needed from July 22 to 29, 2002.

Since sleeping accommodation is not normally considered in the design of schools, Article 2.1.2.2. of the Ontario Fire Code would be applicable to the temporary use.

Article 2.1.2.2. of the Fire Code states:

> "Activities that create a hazard and that are not allowed for in the original design shall not be carried out in a **building** unless **approved** provisions are made to control the hazard."

The Article prohibits an owner from using their facility for a purpose other than for which it was designed without first obtaining approval from the authority having jurisdiction, this being the Chief Fire Official (CFO) in the municipality. Further, the Article provides the authority for the CFO to approve the use of schools and other designated facilities for temporary use such as sleeping accommodation. Prior to granting approval, the CFO must be satisfied that appropriate measures are taken in the form of fire safety systems and procedures to provide an adequate level of life safety for the occupants who may be in the facility at the time.

The guideline provides criteria that should be considered in determining the suitability and approval of the facility for sleeping accommodation, including the installation of fire safety devices and establishment of fire safety procedures for school board personnel, WYD volunteers and pilgrims. There are some minimum requirements that must be provided in the facility before consideration can be contemplated and these are identified in Part A on the School Designation Form (see Appendix C).

Although the guideline has been developed for the WYD event, the principles and procedures can be adapted for use in the assessment of assembly facilities for sleeping accommodation for similar events.

2.0 SUBMISSION FOR APPROVAL

The submission for approval must be made to the Chief Fire Official (CFO) of the local municipal fire department. It is the owner's responsibility (in this case the school board) to ensure that the submission contains sufficient information for the CFO to make a decision. It is also important to note that it is the owner's responsibility to comply with all the conditions of the approval.

Prior to making the submission, it is important that the school board meet with the local municipal fire officials to determine any additional requirements that may be necessary for the application.

The submission for approval for temporary use should include the following:

Covering letter identifying the facility;
Fire safety responsibilities and procedures;
Floor plans;
Pilgrim information sheet; and
School designation form.

Each of these items is covered in more detail in the following sections.

3.0 SCHOOL BOARD SUBMISSION COVER LETTER

The cover letter must be prepared by the school board identifying the reason for the application, the period of time for the temporary use, the accompanying documentation, and confirmation that the information provided has been reviewed by the appropriate senior staff member.

For your convenience, a draft letter is attached in Appendix A.

4.0 WYD FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURES

In order to ensure an adequate on site response to a fire emergency that may occur in the facility during the temporary use, sufficient human resources must be present in each location. These persons should include the school custodian, at least two supervisory personnel from the WYD organization and a pilgrim from each sleeping area to act as fire warden for their area. Where a single sleeping area, such as a gymnasium, has an occupant load greater than 50 persons, there must be at least one fire warden for each 50 pilgrims.

On the first day of occupancy, fire wardens must be selected and an initial meeting held with the school custodian, supervisory staff and fire wardens. The duties for these individuals must be discussed and a full fire drill held, with all occupants participating. The school custodian, supervisory staff and fire wardens must be familiar with the means to manually activate the fire alarm system. During the fire drill, the occupants should become familiar with their evacuation routes and understand where they are to meet once outside.

Duties and responsibilities for these persons must include the details identified in subsections 4.1 to 4.3 in this guideline.

4.1 School Custodian

The custodian must be on duty at all times that the building is occupied and be familiar with the school and its emergency equipment and systems.

Regular daily duties

- check fire alarm system for operation
- check egress routes and exits to ensure that they are available for use and not obstructed
- check that exit lights are illuminated while the building is occupied
- check that smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms are in place and functional
- check that fire access routes are kept clear
- collect and remove refuse from the building

Emergency duties in event of fire or alarm

- activate the fire alarm
- call fire department
- provide access to public address system if necessary
- meet emergency responders and supervisory staff at principal entrance

4.2 Supervisory Staff

The supervisory staff must be readily identifiable to both the occupants of the facility and, in the case of an emergency, to the responding fire department. It is recommended that the supervisory staff wear a reflective vest.

Regular duties

- ensure that fire wardens are appointed and on duty
- conduct a fire watch patrol throughout the facility once per hour to include:
    - check egress routes and exits to ensure that they are available for use and not obstructed
    - check to ensure that there is no smoking
    - check to ensure that there are no open flames (candles)
    - check that doors to rooms not in use are kept closed
- conduct patrol of the exterior to ensure appropriate site security
- meet once per evening with the fire wardens and custodian prior to securing school

Emergency duties in event of fire or alarm

- activate the fire alarm
- ensure that evacuation has started and meet custodian and emergency responders at principal entrance
- report to emergency responders of any persons that may still be in building

4.3 Fire Wardens

Regular daily duties

- assign a helper to any person who may need assistance to evacuate
- take evening roll call
- ensure means of egress from sleeping area kept clear

- be aware of fire evacuation procedures
- report any fire hazards to supervisory staff
- ensure that there is no smoking or open flames present
- meet once per evening with the supervisory staff and custodian prior to securing school

Emergency duties

- assist in evacuation of assigned sleeping area to outside collection area
- close door to sleeping area after room cleared
- check evening roster and inform supervisory staff of any person not accounted for
- inform supervisory staff of any person who may still be in the building
- designated fire warden – check washroom/change room for any persons

5.0 SITE AND FLOOR PLANS

Site and floor plans of the facility must be prepared and submitted with the application. The plans must indicate the rooms and areas where sleeping will be taking place and the egress routes intended for use by the occupants. A safe outside assembly area must be identified on the site plan for the pilgrims to gather in the event of an emergency evacuation.

A copy of the evacuation routes showing the exits from the building must be posted in each sleeping room.

6.0 FIRE EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

A pilgrim information sheet must be prepared for distribution to each pilgrim at check-in, providing information on the emergency procedures and fire safety precautions. In addition, a copy of the information sheet must be posted in each sleeping room.

A sample information sheet is attached in Appendix B. The sheet must be available in the appropriate languages as may be necessary for each facility.

7.0 SCHOOL DESIGNATION FORM

The school designation form should be completed and accompany the application. This form will identify the facility, provide the name of the contact person for the school board, indicate that the minimum requirements for use have been met and establish the occupant load for the facility.

A copy of the form is attached in Appendix C.

8.0 FIRE PROTECTION EQUIPMENT

Approved single station smoke alarms must be provided in each sleeping room and sleeping area. In large sleeping areas, such as a gymnasium, where the ceiling height may be such that it would reduce the effectiveness of the smoke alarms, the smoke alarm may be omitted. In these cases, a smoke alarm is required in the corridor leading to the gymnasium where the corridor is not already equipped with smoke detectors connected to the fire alarm system.

Approved carbon monoxide detectors must be provided in rooms and corridors beside service rooms containing fuel-fired appliances and in the room directly above the service rooms.

These devices may be battery operated.

In the event that a smoke alarm or carbon monoxide detector activates, the fire alarm emergency procedures must be initiated.

Appendix A

SCHOOL BOARD SUBMISSION COVER LETTER

SCHOOL BOARD LETTERHEAD

FIRE DEPARTMENT

RE: SCHOOL NAME
SCHOOL ADDRESS
TEMPORARY USE FOR SLEEPING ACCOMMODATION
WORLD YOUTH DAY 2002
JULY 22-29, 2002

On behalf of the (school board), we are submitting an application to permit temporary use of the above noted school for sleeping accommodation for the period from July 22, 2002 to July 29, 2002.

Accompanying this application, please find attached fire safety procedures for designated persons, site plan, floor plans indicating the proposed sleeping areas in the school, the fire safety procedures for pilgrims and the school designation form.

The school board will comply with the "WYD Fire Safety Procedures" identified in Section 4 of the "Use of Schools For Sleeping Accommodation Guideline".

All of the information has been prepared and reviewed for accuracy by:

Name:
Position:

Yours truly,

(Director of physical plant)

Appendix B

FIRE EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

FIRE EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Upon discovery of fire

- Leave the fire area immediately and assist anyone in immediate danger to evacuate.
- Close all doors behind you to confine the fire.
- Activate the fire alarm and alert other staff (fire warden, supervisory staff, custodian).
- Use exit stairwells to leave the building.
- Proceed to designated outside assembly area.

Upon hearing fire alarm

- Follow any instructions that may be given by the fire warden.
- Leave the building immediately.
- Close all doors behind you to confine the fire.
- Use exit stairwells to leave the building.
- Proceed to designated outside assembly area.

NOTE:

- Do not use the elevators.
- Do not re-enter the building.

FIRE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

- Any garbage or refuse is to be deposited into the proper receptacles.
- Open flames (candles) and cooking appliances are prohibited.
- No smoking or alcoholic beverages are permitted within the school or on school property.

Appendix C

SCHOOL DESIGNATION FORM

WORLD YOUTH DAY 2002 (WYD) - School Designation Form

Temporary Use of Schools for Sleeping Accommodation

School Name: **School Board (S.B.):**

Address: **S.B. contact person:**

Phone number:

A. Minimum requirements	**Yes**		**Yes**
Mechanical/ Natural ventilation	☐	WYD Fire Safety Procedures	☐
Carbon monoxide detectors provided in rooms and corridors adjacent to service rooms containing fuel-fired appliances	☐	Fire Alarm System	☐
		Battery operated smoke alarms provided in classrooms Used for sleeping and corridors providing access to gyms	☐

B1. Sprinklered schools ☐
[maximum 45 m (150 ft) travel distance to an exit]

# of rooms ___ *Net area _____

# of gyms ____ Net area _____

(Hazardous classrooms excluded)
Occupant load based on
4.6 m^2 (50 sq. ft.) per person.

OCCUPANT LOAD BASED ON SAFETY FEATURES = _____

Note:
*Net Area = clear floor space
Maximum 15 persons per room with only one means of egress.
Only rooms within the travel limit to be used for sleeping.

B2. Unsprinklered schools ☐
[maximum 30 m (100 ft) travel distance to an exit]

Protected exits
[min. 30 minute fire-resistance rating]

# of rooms ____ *Net area _____

# of gyms ____ Net area _____

(Hazardous classrooms excluded)
Occupant load based on
4.6 m^2 (50 sq. ft.) per person.

OCCUPANT LOAD BASED ON SAFETY FEATURES = _____

Note:
*Net Area = clear floor space
Maximum 15 persons per room with only one means of egress.
Only rooms within the travel limit to be used for sleeping.

B3. Unsprinklered schools ☐
[maximum 30 m (100 ft) travel distance to an exit]

Unprotected exits
[Occupancy limited to 1st storey only]

# of rooms ____ *Net area _____

# of gyms _____ Net area _____

(Hazardous classrooms excluded)
Occupant load based on
4.6 m^2 (50 sq. ft.) per person.

OCCUPANT LOAD BASED ON SAFETY FEATURES =_____

Note:
*Net Area = clear floor space
Maximum 15 persons per room with only one means of egress.
Only rooms within the travel limit to be used for sleeping.

C. Washrooms including urinals - number of persons of each sex

100 persons	5 water closets + 2 lavatories	Total male W.C. = _____
Over 100 persons	6 water closets + 1 per increment of 30 lavatories - 1 per 2 water closets	Total female W.C. = _____
		OCCUPANT LOAD = _____

TOTAL OCCUPANT LOAD (lesser of B1, B2, B3 or C) =

FOR ASSIGNMENT PURPOSES ONLY:

School barrier-free accessible **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐

Showers available **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐

Prepared by: .....

(Signature): .....

Date: .....

WORLD YOUTH DAY 2002

Process for designation of schools used for sleeping accommodation

1. Assigned technical staff of the School Board shall complete the "designation" form.
2. The package of the forms and schematic plans for designated schools shall be accompanied by a letter from the school board official confirming accuracy of the information and acceptance of the operating conditions.
3. Designation forms and schematic plans indicating sleeping rooms shall be filed with the fire department and if requested, with the building department.

Operating Conditions

1. Equipment and furniture
   - may be stored off-site
   - stored in unoccupied rooms (maximum 2 tier stacking) or
   - remain in occupied room along the sides.
2. Portables are not to be used for sleeping accommodation.
3. Access prohibited to kitchens, cooking appliances and hazardous classrooms.
4. A minimum of two (2) trained supervisors per school.
5. Assignment of 1 fire warden per classroom.
6. Assignment of 1 fire warden for every 50 occupants in gymnasium.
7. A fire drill shall be performed on the first day.
8. Trained supervisors shall have pertinent information such as emergency numbers and a telephone (cellular or hardwired).
9. A caretaker designated by the school board shall be present in the school during operating hours.
10. Exits and emergency lighting shall be maintained and operational during occupancy.
11. Lighting shall be provided in the access to exit routes.
12. Daily walk through by caretaker to ensure compliance with fire code requirements:
    - exit lights illuminated while the building is occupied
    - smoke alarms and carbon dioxide detectors are functional
    - fire alarm system is operational and functional
    - egress routes and exits are kept free of obstructions.
13. Schematic plans of the site identifying sleeping rooms to be kept on site and accessible to the caretaker.
14. Refuse shall be collected and removed from the building daily.
15. Open flames (candles) and cooking appliances are prohibited.
16. No smoking or alcoholic beverages are permitted within the school or on school property.
17. Access to the P.A. system by the caretaker.
18. Fire access routes shall be kept clear.